

Capital Bulletin

DatelineWashington

The Senate Internal Security Subcommittee, whose activities and inactivities sometimes defy analysis, has been sitting on a report which will do much to answer questions raised by the firing of Assistant Secretary of State Abba Schwartz. The major thrust of this report is not at Mr. Schwartz's shaky ideological underpinning but at the manner in which he ran his Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs.

Those who have seen the product of the Senate Subcommittee's researches say that it sets down in considerable detail a record of administrative bobbles, inefficiency and general trouble-making—as well as Mr. Schwartz's predilection for always taking the opening to the left. To quote one informed Washington columnist: "The major criticism leveled at the Assistant Secretary was that he kept the State Department in a turmoil by clashing over minor details with all comers—Right, Left or Center—and that he left every operation he touched a shambles."

The Internal Security Subcommittee's concern over Mr. Schwartz's political posture prompted the inquiry in the first place. The law gives the government certain discretionary powers where the admission of Communists is involved. But these powers are to be exercised only in exceptional cases. It was Assistant Secretary Schwartz's belief that this was silly—and he took it upon himself to "amend" the law by allowing notorious anti-American propagandists into the country.

It was this "open door" policy that led Mr. Schwartz

to overrule the Passport Office by allowing such people as a Lenin prize winner and a card-carrying professor to enter the United States for a round of poisonous speeches. One of his journalistic defenders let the cat out of the bag by reporting that the Assistant Secretary was ready and willing to "grant visas to anyone wanting to come to the United States to lecture, teach or even agitate."

Anyone, that is, but those who took an anti-Communist position. It was Mr. Schwartz, for example, who succeeded in expelling Michel Struelens, the information specialist who represented the government of Katanga. His office, too, pressed for Immigration sanctions against the Rhodesian Information Office, in order to cut off its documented reports on the situation in Central Africa.

• It should be noted, too, that Mr. Schwartz was part of the cabal which plotted to oust Otto Otepka, the State Department Security officer. Mr. Otepka's "crime" was simply that he attempted to enforce security regulations and, in line with his duties, testified truthfully before the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. The harassment of Mr. Otepka—the telephone taps, the midnight searches of his files, and the ostracism which was visited upon him during his working hours—never seemed to trouble Abba Schwartz's personal or official conscience.

His *bête noire*, however, was Miss Frances Knight, who heads the Passport Office. Under Miss Knight, the once long chore of getting a passport, and the frustration of dealing with clerks who did not know their business, was ended. Even Miss Knight's bitterest critics admit that she brought efficiency and streamlined procedures to the Passport Office.

Miss Knight, however, scrupulously followed the regulations set down by the State Department. She did not think it her prerogative to read the law to suit her political prejudices. And she believed that the enemies of the United States should not be coddled and/or favored by an in-

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strumentality of the Federal Government. This was anathema to Mr. Schwartz and he vowed that Miss Knight would have to go.

This campaign against her was undercover, but it was designed to make her seem like a follower of the crackpot Right—which, presumably should have had nothing to do with the case, even if true, so long as she did her job well. Ironically, it was this campaign which led to Mr. Schwartz's ouster. Miss Knight has good friends on Capitol Hill and in that small but determined group in the executive branch which calls itself "The American Underground." An inquiry into his role in the "Get Knight" movement led to disclosure of Schwartz's administrative inefficiencies and his penchant for throat cutting.

With Abba Schwartz out, however, the cabal has continued to function. Its first counterstroke, to leak stories of what the press is calling the "surveillance" of Americans abroad, now fills the newspapers. What the Passport Office had done, following a long-established custom, was to alert consular and diplomatic posts of the presence of certain individuals whose acts might be inimical to the United States. This has been done at the request of the FBI, the CIA, and other intelligence and counter-intelligence organizations—not at the behest of Miss Knight.

● Had this leak been offensive to the Liberal Establishment, there would have been a great outcry. Since its purpose was to embarrass Miss Knight, no questions are being asked in the *Washington Post*, and other sources of planned confusion remain mute. The motivated leak is, of course, a tried and true weapon in Washington, and the haste to blame Miss Knight for doing what her predecessors had done—and what the State Department had always sanctioned—is a give-away of the cabal's intent. It demonstrates, moreover, that Mr. Schwartz's cries of "rape" are less than sincere, however heart-rending they may sound.

QUINCY